

Washington, DC – Today the House passed the Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act, legislation introduced by Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.). The legislation, H.R. 137, which is co-sponsored by Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-CA) and Congressman Roscoe Bartlett (R-MD), would establish felony-level jail time (up to three years) for violators of the Federal Animal Fighting Law. The vote passed by a vote of 368-39.

“Illegal animal fighting is not just unspeakably cruel to the animals involved, but inevitably involves illegal gambling, drugs and human violence,” said Congressman Blumenauer. “For the last five years we’ve been working to secure the penalties to shut down this barbaric crime. Current federal law is not strong enough, and now that every state but one, Louisiana, has made animal fighting illegal, it is appropriate that the federal government step up to its responsibilities. The passage of our legislation today in the House is an important step forward and we will continue our hard work to pass companion legislation in the Senate.”

The Animal Fighting Prohibition Enforcement Act amends Title 18 of the U.S. Code to strengthen the maximum jail time from the one-year misdemeanor level in current law, and prohibits interstate and foreign commerce in cockfighting weapons. H.R. 137 has 303 co-sponsors in the House and has also been introduced in the Senate, S. 261, by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Senator John Ensign (R-NV), Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Senator Diane Feinstein (D-CA).

Congressman Blumenauer is a member of the Budget Committee, the Committee on Ways and Means, and the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming